

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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### HINCHEY MEETS WITH MIDDLE EAST LEADERS

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today continues his trip to the Middle East where he is meeting with national leaders in that region. Hinchey is taking the opportunity to promote the peace plan proposed by the fact-finding committee headed by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell. Traveling with the Center for Middle East Peace, Hinchey has met with leaders of Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan, and expects to meet with leaders of Syria and Israel before returning to Washington on Tuesday.

"Everyone that we've met with recognizes that the situation remains very difficult and very dangerous," said Hinchey. "But the Mitchell Plan provides us with a blueprint for the cessation of the violence and a beginning to a resolution of long-standing issues."

Following the October 2000 summit at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, President Clinton formed a fact-finding committee headed by former Senator Mitchell. The committee's work was endorsed by Secretary of State Colin Powell in January. On May 21, the committee presented its findings to President Bush. The Mitchell Plan calls for an immediate end to violence between Palestinians and Israelis and makes more than 15 specific recommendations as to how the two parties can restore the trust necessary to move the peace process forward.

Earlier this week, Hinchey met with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Egypt and the Foreign Ministers of Lebanon and Jordan. He expects to meet with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Syria tomorrow. This weekend he will be in Israel where he is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and former Prime Minister Ehud Barak. Hinchey is also meeting with the American ambassadors to each of these countries, including Ambassador to Jordan William Burns, who was recently appointed by President Bush as Special Envoy to the Middle East.

The Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation was established in 1989 with the goal of fostering the atmosphere necessary for the promotion and protection of peace in the Middle East. Toward that end, the Center seeks to enable American decision-makers to witness first hand the challenges facing leaders who seek peace in the region.

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